

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS
CONSERVANCY
“RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY” (RMC)
April 17, 2003**

Call to Order: 11:15 a.m. -900 S. Fremont Street, Alhambra, CA

I. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mr. Dan Arrighi; Ms. Heather Barnett (for Secretary Nichols); Ms. Margaret Clark; Chair Frank Colonna; Mr. David De Jesus; Ms. Georgia Lipphardt (for Mr. Wright); Ms. Kathie Matsuyama (for Ms. Wilson); Vice Chair Bev Perry; Mr. Rick Ruiz; Ms. Debbie Smith (for Mr. Hickox); Mr. Brian Sasaki (for Mr. Noyes); Dr. Paul Yost

Members Absent: Ms. Jody Cook (for Mr. Blackwell); Supervisor Gloria Molina; Mr. Robert Miyashiro (for Mr. Peace); Mr. Hayden Sohm (for Ms. Coleman); Mr. Tom Stetson; Mr. Dan Young

Staff Present: Belinda Faustinos, Executive Officer
Enrique Arroyo, Deputy Executive Officer
Terry Fujimoto, Deputy Attorney General
Frank Simpson, Project Analyst
Bobby Cochran, Project Analyst
Matt Kaiser, Information Systems Technician
Diane Maikui, Executive Secretary

Chair Colonna stated that the Board would hear public comments, then approve the meeting minutes from February 28, 2003, and then go to VII, Closed Session of the agenda.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Don May, representing Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust, 4927 Minturn Avenue, Lakewood, CA stated that they submitted a version of the Los Cerritos Wetland Conceptual Plan to Ms. Faustinos and would forward a version to the members of the Board as soon as it was available.

Larry Kaplan, representing Trust for Public Land (TPL), 3250 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA referred to the Woodland Duck Farm and indicated TPL's belief that it was a unique opportunity for a land conservation project to have a positive impact not only on the community, but on the entire region. He noted the opportunities for habitat restoration, watershed management, as well as public recreation.

Michele Vadon, City Attorney for City of Industry, 18301 Von Karman, Suite 1050, Irvine, CA asked that the City of Industry be allowed to participate in the acquisition for the Woodland Duck Farm project.

Jim Coiner, Coiner Nursery, tenant of Woodland Farms since 1977, stated his desire to remain a tenant of Woodland Farms and asked to be considered as a first right of refusal for the property south of Avocado Creek, if the City of Industry was not involved in the acquisition.

Jeff Yann, representing the Upper San Gabriel Valley MWD, Sierra Club, 1622 Adalia Avenue, Hacienda Heights, CA stated that their vision and motto of the San Gabriel River was "clean and green from the mountains to the sea". He stated his desire to have a greenbelt of habitat along the river from Azusa Canyon out to Seal Beach. He strongly supported educational opportunities for people to understand the importance of the river, and see Woodland Farms as representative for their vision. He noted that the RMC's mission, as stated in the Open Space Plan, was compatible with the goals of the Sierra Club. He urged the Board to assure that Woodland Farms was acquired and moved into public ownership.

Johanna Zetterberg, representing 57,000 members of Sierra Club Angeles Chapter, strongly urged the Board to vote in favor of acquiring Woodland Farms. She summarized the RMC's Mission Statement.

Scott Wilson, President of North East Trees, 4201 Olson Dr., Los Angeles, CA stated his support for the RMC to acquire the Woodland Farms property. He felt it would be a mistake if the RMC did not take the opportunity to move forward to acquire the property and develop it so that it fit in with the Whittier Narrows project, as well as other projects along the river.

Helen Rahder, 13953 Penn Street, Whittier, CA stated that the City of Whittier had spent the last 10 years acquiring open space, using different Prop funds and working with TPL on projects. She stated it took effort to acquire open space and preserve it for future generations. She felt that the opportunity to acquire land for public use may not come again, and Woodland Farms was an important piece of the puzzle that linked the habitat area in Puente Chino Hills with the Whittier Narrows area and the river area. She urged the Board to take advantage of the opportunity to acquire the property and fill in the last piece of the puzzle.

Sally Schacht, representing the Whittier Conservancy, 10115 Homeland Avenue, Whittier, CA stated her support of the RMC acquiring the Woodland Farms property in order to save riparian habitat, the wildlife and the river of the San Gabriel Watershed. She stated that southern California was being engulfed by large boxed stores, and same type housing developments, and when there was an opportunity to preserve a piece of land as important as Woodland Farms, the action be taken to do so. She urged

the RMC to acquire the property and save the property for residents of southern California to enjoy for future generations.

Theresa Rivas, equestrian, 12815 Rose Drive, Whittier, CA stated she had used the trails along the San Gabriel River for 25 years. She stated her support of the RMC acquiring the Woodland Farms property and stated that the area did not need any more buildings or empty real estate. She stated what southern California needed was more secure open space and urged the Board to go forward with the purchase.

Karla Flippin, former owner of Pegasus Ranch and equestrian, 10816 Mulhell Street, El Monte, CA supported the RMC acquiring Woodland Farms. She noted that most of the Edison property along the river was being developed with mini-storage businesses. She stated she had ridden along the river trails for 27 years and had seen a steady decline of trail access properties. She urged the Board to go forward with acquiring the property, and asked that they keep the open space alive for the equestrian community along the river.

Henry Lo, speaking on behalf of State Senator Romero, urged the City of Industry to work with the Conservancy in support of the acquisition of the Woodland Farms property. He stated that acquisition of the property by the RMC would allow for the creation of a regional San Gabriel River park in a densely populated San Gabriel Valley. He noted the need for low impact recreational and open space and stated that it would benefit the surrounding communities with park poor areas.

III. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 28, 2003 MINUTES

Dr. Yost moved to approve the Minutes as submitted; Ms. Clark seconded the motion; Mr. Ruiz and Ms. Smith abstained; unanimously passed.

XII. CLOSED SESSION

It is recommended the Board conduct a Closed Session pursuant to Government Code Section 11126 (c) (7) (A) regarding discussion and possible action of property negotiations with Trust for Public Land regarding acquisition of the Woodland Duck Farm property, Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 8110-029-003, -004, -005, -006, -007, -008; 8115-001-002; 8115-002-001, -002, -003, -004, -005, -007; 8564-012-001; 8110-001-023, -024, -026; 8110-021-032, -033; 8110-017-001.

ADJOURNED PUBLIC SESSION OF THE RMC BOARD MEETING TO HOLD CLOSED SESSION AT 11:45 A.M.

RECONVENED PUBLIC SESSION OF THE RMC BOARD MEETING AT 12:35 P.M.

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION: The Board gave instructions to negotiators regarding discussion and possible action concerning property negotiations with Trust for Public Land regarding acquisition of Woodland Duck Farm property and Item VII C5

consideration of resolution recommending that the Watershed Conservation Authority enter into negotiations with Trust for Public Land and the City of Industry regarding acquisition of the Woodland Duck Farm property.

IV. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Colonna had no report to give.

V. DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL'S REPORT

Mr. Fujimoto had no report to give.

VI. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ms. Perry nominated Mr. Colonna to the position of Chairman; Dr. Yost seconded the motion; unanimously passed.

Dr. Yost nominated Ms. Perry to the position of Vice-Chairperson; Mr. DeJesus seconded the motion; unanimously passed.

VII. PRESENTATIONS

Chair Colonna presented Project Analyst Bobby Cochran with a Certificate of Appreciation for his dedicated hard work with the Rivers and Mountain Conservancy.

Ms. Faustinos stated staff's appreciation of all Bobby's efforts and thanked him for all his hard work. She further stated that Bobby had been a true visionary in getting the RMC work program in order and was an emulation of what the RMC was attempting to achieve.

Chair Colonna moved items VIII C4, C5, C6, and C7 forward.

VIII. STAFF REPORTS

C. ACTION ITEMS

5. Consideration of resolution recommending that the Watershed Conservation Authority enter into negotiations with the Trust for Public Land and the City of Industry regarding acquisition of the Woodland Duck Farm property.

Mr. Simpson made a brief presentation of the Woodland Farms property for those in the audience not familiar with the site.

Mr. Ruiz moved; Mr. DeJesus seconded; and it unanimously passed to adopt Resolution 2003-22 amending it to read "Resolution of the San Gabriel and lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC) recommending that the

Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) enter into negotiations with the Trust for Public Land regarding the acquisition of the duck farm property”, thus striking City of Industry from the entire resolution.

Mr. Ruiz noted the Board’s excitement about the potential of working with the City of Industry in developing a joint project for the site. He directed staff work closely with the City of Industry to determine how the RMC and the City could work together, and to work with any other organization on joint projects for the RMC consideration. He stated that the RMC was interested in continuing to improve the property in the best interest of the RMC and the City of Industry. He hoped to build on the relationship between the RMC and the City of Industry and that the City adopt the RMC Land Use Plan.

Chair Colonna asked if there were any members of the public that wished to speak on the matter.

Michele Vadon, City Attorney for the City of Industry, stated that the City Council and Mayor of Industry would be disappointment that they would not be part of the negotiations with the Trust for Public Land. She felt that if the City were involved in the negotiations, it would set the tone for the RMC to work with local jurisdictions in the future.

Vice-Chair Perry clarified that the resolution was only relating to the Watershed Conservation Authority to enter into negotiations with TPL in acquiring the property. She stated that there was a follow-up motion, which was not part of the resolution, which directed the RMC to work very closely with the City of Industry in considering potential projects for the future.

Mr. DeJesus stated that the resolution did not have any indication of plans or projects for the site, but only addressed acquisition, and he hoped that did not confuse the City of Industry’s City Council.

Chair Colonna stated that he did not feel it was the will of the Board to not want to be a good neighbor with the City of Industry. He stated that the resolution addressed the matter of negotiating a purchase of the property only, as the Board did not have the desire to have a partner in the purchase process. He noted that the Board was not precluding any future opportunity to work with Industry, and wanted to be a good neighbor.

Dr. Yost stated that the Board understood that they needed to work with local communities, as the RMC was a partnership and did not have eminent domain.

Vice-Chair Perry moved; Mr. Ruiz seconded; and it unanimously passed directing staff to discuss with interested parties any possible projects or ideas for the future use of the property, and that staff prepare a letter to the City Council Members of the City of Industry expressing the Board’s desire to work with them on future projects.

6. Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 40 funds to the Watershed Conservation Authority for acquisition of the Woodland Duck Farm Property.

Vice-Chair Perry moved; Mr. DeJesus seconded; and it unanimously passed to adopt Resolution 2003-23 authorizing a grant of Proposition 40 funds to the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) for acquisition of the Woodland Duck Farm property.

Chair Colonna asked if any members of the public wished to speak on the matter.

No one from the audience responded.

7. Consideration of resolution recommending that the Watershed Conservation Authority apply for Proposition 13 funds from the Resources Agency for acquisition of the Woodland Duck Farm property.

Vice-Chair Perry moved; Mr. Ruiz seconded; and it unanimously passed to adopt Resolution 2003-24 recommending the Watershed Conservation Authority apply for Proposition 13 funds from the Resources Agency for acquisition of the Woodland Duck Farm property.

Chair Colonna asked if any members of the public wished to speak on the matter.

No one from the audience responded.

A. DISCUSSION AND REVIEW ITEMS

1. Legislation and initiatives report
2. Partnership and liaison activities
3. Habitat and Science Panel activities
4. Budget expenditure reports and related fiscal matters

Vice-Chair Perry moved; Mr. Arrighi seconded; and it unanimously passed to receive and file the discussion and review items.

B. CONSENT ITEMS

1. Consideration of resolution authorizing grant agreement extensions with the Resources Agency and the City of Paramount for the proposed Ralph C. Dills Park Expansion.
2. Consideration of a resolution authorizing grant agreement extensions with the Resources Agency and the City of Azusa for the proposed San Gabriel River Wilderness Park.

3. Consideration of resolution authorizing an appraisal of the Cool Springs property, City of Azusa.
4. Consideration of resolution authorizing conforming amendments to the Watershed Conservation Authority joint powers agreement.

Mr. Arrighi moved; Ms. Clark seconded; and it unanimously passed to receive and file the consent calendar.

C. ACTION ITEMS

1. Consideration of resolution authorizing purchase of office equipment items over \$5,000.

Ms. Faustinos stated that several large pieces of office equipment would have to be purchased in order to move to the new office location once the negotiations were complete for the acquisition of the Duck Farm property.

Vice-Chair Perry referred to the proposed laser printer and asked why it would cost \$7,000.

Ms. Faustinos stated that the printer would be a color laser printer that would allow staff to produce oversized copies. She noted that the printer would be very beneficial taking into account the types of presentations staff prepared for and would be more economical as staff would not have use outside vendors for the oversized copies.

Vice-Chair Perry referred to the photo copy machine and stated that her City leased rather than purchased copy machines and asked if it would be better for the RMC to lease.

Ms. Faustinos stated that the RMC had to follow state purchasing procedures for each item purchased, and the procedures did not allow for leasing.

Vice-Chair Perry moved; Mr. Arrighi seconded; and it unanimously passed to adopt Resolution 2003-20 authorizing the purchase of office equipment exceeding \$5,000.

Chair Colonna stated that a Board Member had asked that Consent Calendar item B4 be reopened.

- B4.** Consideration of resolution authorizing conforming amendments to the Watershed Conservation Authority joint powers agreement.

Chair Colonna stated that in reading the Joint Powers Agreement, he determined that it would be in the best interest of the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) to allow

an alternate member in the event that a quorum was not possible. Therefore, he was requesting that one alternate be added to the WCA.

Ms. Faustinos stated that adding an alternate would not require an amendment to the agreement, but an action that the Chair could take in terms of designating an alternate to sit on the WCA in the event that one of the members could not attend a meeting.

Chair Colonna asked for the names of the WCA Members.

Ms. Faustinos stated that the members were Mr. Arrighi, Mr. Colonna, Mr. Ruiz, and Dr. Yost.

Chair Colonna designated Ms. Clark as the alternate to the WCA.

C2. Consideration of resolution authorizing the purchase of agency vehicle(s).

Ms. Faustinos stated that two vehicles were being recommended, and that the gator type vehicle would only be purchased in the event that the RMC acquired the Duck Farm property.

Ms. Perry moved; Mr. Arrighi seconded; and it unanimously passed to adopt Resolution 2003-21 authorizing the purchase of agency vehicle(s).

C3. Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant agreement for professional services necessary to implement RMC's Habitat Plan.

Ms. Faustinos stated that the item had been tabled.

IX. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

None were forthcoming.

X. DISCUSSION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None were discussed.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting date was discussed, and it was decided to poll the Board members to determine their availability for the next meeting. Chair Colonna asked that staff concentrate on having the meetings on Fridays at 1:00 p.m., or Thursdays at 12:30 p.m.

XII. Closed Session: Pursuant to Government Code sections 11126 (a) (1), 11126(c)(7)(A), 11126 (e)(1) and 11126.3(a) the Board may hold a closed session at any time during the meeting to discuss and take possible action on personnel matters, receive advice of counsel on pending or potential litigation,

and/or give instructions to negotiators regarding item VII(D)(6) of this agenda. Confidential memoranda related to these issues may be considered during such closed session discussions.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Colonna adjourned the meeting at 1:05 p.m.